

## What buddha taught.

### The attitude of Buddhist:

- **Humanistic Approach**: The Buddha emphasized human potential and achievement. He claimed no divine inspiration and attributed all realization and achievements to human endeavor and intelligence.
- **Individual Responsibility**: Man is his own master, and liberation depends on personal effort and intelligence. The Buddha encouraged self-reliance and self-liberation.
- **Freedom of Thought**: The Buddha advocated freedom of thought and encouraged his followers not to blindly accept teachings but to investigate and discern truth for themselves.
- **Tolerance and Understanding**: The Buddha displayed remarkable tolerance toward other teachings and encouraged understanding rather than condemnation of different beliefs.
- **Importance of Doubt**: Doubt is considered a hindrance to spiritual progress. While doubt is not condemned, it must be resolved through clear understanding.
- **The Invitation to "Come and See"**: The Buddha's teachings are not based on blind faith but on direct experience and understanding. He invited people to "come and see" rather than to simply believe.
- **Practicality and Relevance**: The Buddha's teachings were practical and aimed at alleviating suffering. He focused on teachings that were useful and conducive to spiritual growth.

- **Focus on Suffering and Its Cessation:** The core of the Buddha's teachings revolved around the Four Noble Truths, particularly the understanding of suffering, its causes, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation.
- **Avoidance of Speculative Metaphysics:** The Buddha avoided engaging in metaphysical speculation that did not contribute to the alleviation of suffering or the attainment of enlightenment.

## **The First Noble Truth:**

- **Three Aspects of Dukkha:**
  - Dukkha as ordinary suffering (dukkha-dukkha).
  - Dukkha produced by change (vipariṇāma-dukkha).
  - Dukkha as conditioned states (saṃkhāra-dukkha).
- **The Five Aggregates (Pañcakkhandha):**
  - Matter (rūpakkhandha)
  - Sensations (vedanākkhandha)
  - Perceptions (saññākkhandha)
  - Mental Formations (saṃkhārakkhandha)
  - Consciousness (viññāṇakkhandha)
- **Understanding "Being" or "Individual":**
  - The concept of "self" or "I" is a construct arising from the interplay of these aggregates.
  - These aggregates are impermanent, constantly changing, and devoid of inherent essence.
- **Comparison with Other Philosophies:**
  - Rejects the notion of an unchanging spirit or self.
  - Consciousness is not seen as separate from matter but arises dependent on conditions.

- **View on the Beginning of Life:**
  - Rejects the idea of a beginning to the cycle of life (saṃsāra).
  - Emphasizes the role of ignorance (avijjā) and craving (taṇhā) in perpetuating existence.
- **Attitude Towards Suffering:**
  - Acknowledges suffering but encourages understanding and acceptance rather than resistance or despair.
  - Patience, intelligence, determination, and energy are advocated in dealing with suffering.

## **The Second Noble Truth:**

- The Second Noble Truth in Buddhism identifies craving (taṇhā) as the root cause of suffering (dukkha). This craving, manifesting as desire and attachment, leads to re-existence and perpetuates suffering. However, craving is not the sole cause; it depends on other factors such as sensation, contact, and consciousness in the cycle of dependent arising.
- Craving encompasses not only desire for sense pleasures but also attachment to ideas and beliefs. The Buddha taught that all worldly strife and conflicts stem from this selfish craving. Economic, political, and social issues are rooted in it.
- The theory of karma is central to understanding how craving perpetuates suffering. Volitional actions driven by craving lead to either good or bad consequences, contributing to the cycle of existence (saṃsāra). Liberation from this cycle is possible through wisdom (paññā) that sees reality (nibbāna).
- Death, according to Buddhism, is the cessation of bodily functions, but mental energies continue to manifest in another form, leading to rebirth. There is no permanent self or soul that

transmigrates, but rather a continuous series of moments. The cycle of existence continues as long as craving persists.

- Ultimately, the cessation of craving brings an end to suffering and the cycle of existence. This cessation is achievable through the realization of truth and wisdom.

### The Third Noble Truth:

- **Definition of Nibbāna (Nirvāṇa):**
  - Nibbāna is the cessation of suffering (dukkha) and craving (taṇhā), often described in negative terms due to its ineffable nature.
  - It is liberation from the cycle of suffering and rebirth, commonly known as saṃsāra.
  - Various descriptions from Pāḷi texts emphasize its nature as the extinction of desire, hatred, and delusion.
- **Nature of Nibbāna:**
  - Nibbāna is beyond conceptualization and expression in words due to its supramundane nature.
  - It's not a state of annihilation but the annihilation of the delusion of selfhood.
  - It transcends the dualities of positive and negative, existing beyond the realm of relative concepts.
- **Realization of Nibbāna:**
  - Nibbāna is not the result of a cause-and-effect relationship but is realized through wisdom and insight.
  - The path leading to nibbāna involves the cultivation of wisdom (paññā) and the cessation of craving.
  - It can be realized in this lifetime and leads to the utmost happiness and liberation.
- **Post-Nibbāna Existence:**
  - After the death of an Arahant who has realized nibbāna, there is no further existence or re-existence.

- Questions regarding what happens after nibbāna are considered unanswered or beyond human comprehension.
- **Nature of Reality and Happiness:**
  - Nibbāna transcends all dualities and concepts of good and evil, existing beyond our conventional understanding.
  - Even terms like "happiness" take on a different meaning in the context of nibbāna, emphasizing a state beyond sensation or perception.
- **Approaching Nibbāna:**
  - Understanding nibbāna is not through speculative intellectual discussions but through personal realization and spiritual development.
  - Following the Noble Eightfold Path with patience, diligence, and purification of mind leads one towards the realization of nibbāna.

### The Fourth Noble Truth:

- The Fourth Noble Truth is the "Way" (magga) leading to the cessation of suffering (Dukkhanirodhagāmiṇīpaṭipadā Ariyasacca).
- This path is known as the "Middle Path" (majjhimā paṭipadā), avoiding extremes of sensual pleasure and self-mortification.
- The Noble Eightfold Path consists of eight categories: Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.
- These categories are not sequential but developed simultaneously, aiming at ethical conduct, mental discipline, and wisdom.

- Ethical conduct (sīla) is based on universal love (mettā) and compassion (karuṇā), comprising Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood.
- Mental Discipline (samādhi) includes Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration, aiming at overcoming unwholesome mental states and developing wholesome ones.
- Right Concentration leads to various stages of absorption (jhāna), culminating in pure equanimity and awareness.
- Wisdom (paññā) includes Right Thought and Right Understanding, emphasizing renunciation, good will, non-violence, and understanding of the Four Noble Truths.
- Deep understanding (paṭivedha) sees things in their true nature, without name and label, achievable through meditation.
- The Noble Eightfold Path is a self-discipline process leading to the realization of Ultimate Reality and complete freedom, happiness, and peace.
- It is distinct from faith, belief, prayer, worship, or ceremony but involves moral, spiritual, and mental perfection.
- Buddhist customs and ceremonies in countries serve emotional and religious needs, but the real path lies in individual self-discipline and development.
- The Four Noble Truths entail understanding suffering, eliminating its origin, realizing cessation, and cultivating the path leading to realization.

## The Doctrine of No -Soul:

1. **Rejection of Permanent Soul:** Buddhism denies the existence of a permanent, everlasting, and absolute entity (Soul, Self, Ego, or ātman) behind the changing phenomenal world, as proposed by other religions.
2. **Harmful Effects of the Idea of Self:** The belief in a permanent Self leads to harmful thoughts and behaviors such as selfishness, craving, attachment, hatred, and egoism, causing suffering and conflicts.
3. **Buddha's Teaching of Anattā:** Anattā, or No-Soul, is a central doctrine of Buddhism, which asserts that the idea of a permanent Self is imaginary and false, and it is the root of all suffering.
4. **Two Truths in Buddhism: Buddhism** distinguishes between conventional truth and ultimate truth. While conventional language may use terms like "I" and "self" for practical purposes, ultimate truth reveals the absence of a permanent Self.
5. **Absence of Self in Buddhist Texts:** Buddhist texts categorically deny the existence of a Self within individuals or anywhere else in the universe. The denial applies to both individual beings (puggala) and all states (dhammā).
6. **Misinterpretation Attempts:** Some scholars attempt to introduce the idea of Self into Buddhism, but such attempts are inconsistent with the Buddha's teachings and the spirit of Buddhism.

7. **Analysis of Key Buddhist Texts:** Verses from the Dhammapada and the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta are analyzed to show the absence of a metaphysical Self in Buddhism.
8. **Context of Buddhist Teachings:** The context of the Buddha's teachings, such as his response to Ānanda's inquiry, further supports the absence of a permanent Self in Buddhism.
9. **Self-Reliance:** In a conversation with Ānanda, the Buddha emphasized the importance of depending on oneself and the Dhamma, rather than seeking refuge in external entities. This instruction aimed to provide consolation and guidance to those feeling lonely or helpless after the Buddha's passing.
10. **Cultivation of Mindfulness:** The Buddha taught Ānanda and others to cultivate mindfulness through awareness of the body, sensations, mental states, and mind objects. This practice does not involve any discussion of a metaphysical Self.
11. **Understanding the Feeling of "I AM":** The Buddha's teachings elucidate the transient nature of the feeling of "I AM," which arises from a vague sense of self. Advanced practitioners eventually transcend this feeling through insight and realization.
12. **Kamma and Conditionality:** The Buddha emphasized the principle of conditionality, teaching that kamma (actions) and their results are part of the interconnected web of causality, without the need for a permanent Self to receive the consequences.
13. **No-Self as Truth and Reality:** The teaching of anattā (No-Self) is not a negative or annihilationist concept. Instead, it dispels false beliefs in an imaginary Self and illuminates the truth of impermanence and interdependence.



## **Meditation or Mental Culture:**

### **1. Misconceptions about Meditation:**

- Meditation is often misunderstood as an escape from daily life or as a mystical trance, but true Buddhist meditation is about mental development.
- It has been wrongly ritualized or associated with seeking spiritual powers, which is considered a form of spiritual perversion driven by craving for power.

### **2. Understanding Meditation in Buddhism:**

- The original Pāḷi term "bhāvanā" means "culture" or "development," specifically referring to mental culture or mental development.
- Buddhist meditation aims at cleansing the mind of impurities and cultivating positive qualities like concentration, awareness, intelligence, and joy, leading to the realization of nibbāna (ultimate truth).

### **3. Two Forms of Meditation in Buddhism:**

- Samatha or samādhi focuses on mental concentration, leading to states of meditative absorption but not necessarily to nibbāna.
- Vipassanā or insight meditation, taught by the Buddha, aims at complete liberation and understanding of Ultimate Reality.

### **4. Satipatṭhāna Sutta:**

- A highly venerated discourse on mental development, focusing on four main areas: body, feelings, mind, and mental contents.
- The methods of meditation in this discourse are connected with daily life and activities rather than being isolated practices.

### **5. Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānasati):**

- A practical meditation exercise focusing on breathing to develop concentration and mindfulness.

- It involves observing the breath without strain, gradually bringing the mind to full concentration on the breath.

#### **6. Living in the Present Moment:**

- Mindfulness extends to all activities of daily life, encouraging living fully in the present moment rather than dwelling on past or future concerns.

- Being mindful in every action helps in experiencing life fully and cultivating happiness and contentment.

#### **7. Observing Sensations and Emotions:**

- Meditation involves observing sensations and emotions objectively, understanding their nature, cause, and cessation.

- Through mindful observation, one develops dispassion and detachment from these mental states.

#### **8. Studying Ethical and Spiritual Subjects:**

- Meditation includes studying and contemplating on ethical, spiritual, and intellectual topics to deepen understanding and cultivate qualities like mindfulness, energy, joy, and equanimity.

- This form of meditation leads to insight into Ultimate Truth and realization of liberation.

#### **9. Other Subjects of Meditation:**

- There are various subjects for meditation, including the Four Sublime States (mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā) and investigation into the nature of being and the Four Noble Truths.

## **The Dhammapada**

### **The Path of the Dhamma**

1. Mental phenomena are preceded by the mind, shaped by the mind, and centered on the mind. Good intentions lead to happiness, while evil intentions lead to suffering.
2. Holding onto thoughts of resentment and hatred perpetuates them, while letting go of such thoughts leads to freedom from hatred.
3. Hatred is not appeased by reciprocating hatred but by replacing it with love, as it is an eternal law.
4. Recognizing the destructiveness of quarrels leads to their cessation.
5. Indulging excessively in pleasure and being undisciplined makes one vulnerable to temptation and self-destruction, while living with restraint and discipline prevents this.
6. Wearing the saffron-colored robe symbolizes purity of mind and discipline; without these qualities, it is not meaningful.
7. Understanding the distinction between trivial and important matters is essential for living a holy life.
8. Lust penetrates an untrained mind like rain through a poorly-thatched roof, while a well-trained mind is impervious to it.
9. Evil deeds lead to suffering both in the present life and after death, while good deeds bring happiness in both realms.

10. Mere knowledge of scriptures without practicing their teachings is futile, while even limited knowledge coupled with practice leads to spiritual benefits.
11. **Control of the Mind:**
- a. The mind is described as excitable, unsteady, difficult to control, and difficult to restrain.
  - b. Wise individuals aim to straighten their restless thoughts, akin to an archer aiming an arrow.
  - c. When removed from sense pleasures, the mind trembles, indicating its attachment and struggle to escape the grip of worldly desires.
12. **Training the Mind:**
- a. It is emphasized that the mind is difficult to train, often wandering and settling wherever it pleases.
  - b. Taming the mind brings happiness, implying that discipline leads to inner peace and contentment.
  - c. Guarding the mind is crucial for happiness and freedom from the bonds of worldly attachments.
13. **Comparison and Analogies:**
- a. Analogies like the fish thrashing out of water and the formless, wandering nature of the mind illustrate its complexity.
  - b. The fragility of the body is likened to a clay pot, emphasizing the importance of fortifying the mind against negative influences.
  - c. The well-disciplined mind is highlighted as more beneficial than material possessions or relationships.
14. **Path to Liberation:**

- a. Following the well-taught path of Dhamma is essential for liberation from suffering and worldly entanglements.
- b. The impermanence of the body and the transient nature of sense pleasures are emphasized to encourage detachment and mindfulness.
- c. Right Knowledge and virtue are depicted as essential for transcending worldly limitations and attaining freedom from suffering.

15. **Wisdom and Maturity:**

- a. Wisdom is portrayed as essential for recognizing the impermanence of worldly pursuits and avoiding attachment to transient pleasures.
- b. Immaturity is characterized by selfish deeds and attachment to fleeting desires, leading to sorrow and suffering.
- c. Associating with the wise is encouraged for spiritual growth and understanding of the Dhamma.

16. **Deeds and Consequences:**

- a. Remorseful deeds are deemed poorly done, while deeds leading to happiness and devoid of remorse are considered good.
- b. The consequences of evil deeds are compared to fire smoldering under ashes, eventually leading to suffering.
- c. Material austerity alone is deemed insufficient for spiritual advancement compared to understanding the Dhamma.

17. **Association and Guidance:**

- a. The importance of associating with wise individuals and seeking guidance in the Dhamma is emphasized for spiritual progress.
- b. Those who admonish others for wrong actions and give wise counsel are praised and valued.

**18. Mindfulness and Virtue:**

- a. Virtuous individuals are characterized by surrendering all desires, avoiding idle chatter, and remaining steadfast in virtue regardless of circumstances.
- b. The practice of mindfulness and cultivation of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment lead to the eradication of craving and attainment of nibbāna.

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**27. The Worlds, Awakened Ones, Happiness, Pleasures, Anger:**

- a. Avoid pursuing sense pleasures and false doctrines, and do not prolong worldly attachments.
- b. Be mindful and observe proper practices, leading to happiness in this world and beyond.
- c. View the world as impermanent and illusionary to avoid the grasp of death.
- d. Mindfulness and good deeds illuminate the world and lead to liberation.
- e. Avoid heedlessness and cultivate virtues like patience, generosity, and contentment.
- f. Take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha to find liberation from suffering.
- g. Live without hatred, sickness, or craving, finding happiness in inner peace.



- h. Conquest breeds hatred, while peace brings happiness; strive for inner peace.
- i. Lust, hatred, and attachment lead to suffering; seek the highest happiness in nibbāna.
- j. Associate with the wise and virtuous, avoiding attachment and selfishness.
- k. Practice meditation and morality to avoid being ensnared by worldly pleasures.
- l. Overcome endearment, affection, and attachment to find freedom from grief and fear.
- m. Cultivate virtue, insight, and detachment to gain respect and inner peace.
- n. Develop a desire for the unconditioned and transcend the sensory world.
- o. Good deeds await in the afterlife like welcoming kinsmen upon returning home.
- p. Give up anger, pride, and worldly attachments to transcend sorrow and bondage.
- q. Conquer anger with loving-kindness, evil with goodness, and lies with truthfulness.
- r. Speak the truth, control anger, and give generously to attain the realm of the gods.
- s. Practice self-control and train diligently to end moral defilements and reach nibbāna.
- t. Understand that criticism is inevitable, but strive to be faultless and wise.
- u. Guard against misconduct, evil speech, and thoughts, cultivating discipline and control.

**28. Reflections on Impermanence and Mortality:**

- a. You are like a withered leaf, with the messengers of death drawing near.
- b. Long journey awaits, yet you are unprepared.

29.     **Urgency of Spiritual Practice:**  
a. Make a lamp for yourself; strive earnestly and be wise.  
b. Remove impurities, free yourself from moral defilements to dwell in the world of light.
30.     **Awareness of Aging and Death:**  
a. Advanced in age, in the presence of death, unprepared.  
b. Make a lamp for yourself; strive earnestly and be wise to escape rebirth and old age.
31.     **Gradual Progress and Ethical Living:**  
a. Remove impurities gradually, like a silversmith refining silver.  
b. Evil deeds lead to woe, as rust corrodes iron.
32.     **Importance of Discipline and Vigilance:**  
a. Non-recitation weakens scriptures, like a house falling into ruin without repair.  
b. Vigilance is crucial; lack of it leads to downfall.
33.     **Consequences of Misconduct and Ignorance:**  
a. Sexual misconduct and lack of generosity taint individuals.  
b. Ignorance is the worst taint; wisdom removes it, leading to purity.
34.     **Contrasting Lives:**  
a. Life is easy for the shameless mischief-maker, hard for the humble and pure-hearted.  
b. Wrong actions lead to self-destruction, even in this life.
35.     **The Path to Peace and Liberation:**  
a. Restraint leads to peace; indulgence brings prolonged suffering.  
b. Envy disturbs peace; contentment leads to tranquility.

36.     **Dangers of Passion and Delusion:**  
a. Passion, hate, and delusion lead to suffering.  
b. Self-reflection is challenging but essential; it's easy to see others' faults, hard to see our own.
37.     **The Refuge in the Buddha's Teachings:**  
a. The Buddha's teachings are the only refuge, leading to liberation and purity.  
b. All conditioned things are impermanent; the Buddhas remain unperturbed.
38.     **Wisdom in Judgment and Practice:**  
a. Judgment must be just and considered, not capricious.  
b. Wisdom lies in patience, freedom from hatred, and harmlessness.
39.     **True Renunciation and Liberation:**  
a. Shaving one's head doesn't make a recluse; true renunciation involves discipline and purity.  
b. Seeking alms or following foul Dhamma doesn't make one a Bhikkhu; true Bhikkhus live with detachment and purity.
40.     **The Path to Wisdom and Freedom:**  
a. Meditation brings wisdom; lack of it leads to ignorance.  
b. Cut down the forest of defilements, purify mind, speech, and body to attain wisdom.
41.     **Letting Go of Attachments and Cravings:**  
a. Desire towards sense pleasures binds the mind; cut it off to attain liberation.  
b. Fantasy and attachment to family and possessions lead to bondage; remember the impermanence of life.
42.     **The Practice of Mindfulness and Harmlessness:**

- a. Be mindful and contemplative, always doing what's right, to end suffering.
  - b. Those who practice mindfulness of the body and harmlessness find peace.
43.     **Devotion to the Triple Gem:**
- a. Disciples of Gotama are vigilant, focused on Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha day and night.
  - b. They delight in harmlessness and meditation, avoiding the suffering of cyclic existence.
44.     **The Radiance of Virtue:**
- a. Confidence and purity of conduct bring honor and respect.
  - b. The good shine brightly, while the wicked pass unseen.
45.     **Solitude and Spiritual Delight:**
- a. Solitude, self-reliance, and self-discipline lead to delight in the forest grove.
46.     **Upholding Truthfulness and Discipline:**
- a. Speaking truth and acknowledging wrongdoing prevent moral decline.
  - b. Discipline in thought, word, and deed is essential for those wearing the saffron robe.
47.     **Admonition Against Adultery:**
- a. Adultery leads to loss of merit, sleep, and eventual suffering.
  - b. Illicit pleasures only bring fear and condemnation.
48.     **Importance of Righteous Conduct:**
- a. Careless asceticism and unfulfilled vows yield little reward.
  - b. Diligent good deeds outweigh indulging in evil.

- 49. Mindfulness and Self-Defense:**
- a. Guarding against moral defilements is crucial for spiritual protection.
  - b. Wasting moments in heedlessness contributes to moral decline.
- 50. Discernment and Right Views:**
- a. Wrong views lead to a downward trajectory.
  - b. Upholding right views leads to spiritual progress.
- 51. Patience and Endurance:**
- a. Enduring harsh words with patience strengthens the mind.
  - b. Cultivating a well-trained mind surpasses physical training.
- 52. Overcoming Craving:**
- a. Uprooting craving through wisdom is crucial for liberation.
  - b. Craving binds individuals to suffering and rebirth.
- 53. Liberation from Attachments:**
- a. Freedom from selfish desires leads to liberation.
  - b. Virtue and wisdom pave the path to freedom.
- 54. Virtue and Wisdom:**
- a. The gift of Dhamma brings an end to craving and sorrow.
  - b. Greed, hatred, ignorance, and selfish desire corrode the mind, while virtue and wisdom lead to liberation.

**Bhikkhu (Monk) Section:**

- 55. Restraint of Senses:** Discipline in controlling one's senses—eyes, ears, nose, tongue—is emphasized for inner peace and freedom from sorrow.
- 56. Service and Meditation:** True monks serve others selflessly, meditate deeply, and find peace within themselves.

- 57. **Contentment and Non-Jealousy:** Contentment with what one has and absence of jealousy are crucial for successful meditation.
- 58. **Loving-Kindness and Confidence:** Cultivating loving-kindness towards all beings and having confidence in Buddha's teachings lead to peace.
- 59. **Importance of Meditation and Wisdom:** Meditation is vital for concentration, but wisdom is equally important; both lead one closer to enlightenment.
- 60. **Reflecting on Impermanence:** Reflecting on the impermanent nature of existence leads to joy and is a step towards the deathless (nibbāna).
- 61. **Practice and Self-Reliance:** Train the senses, adhere to moral codes, and keep noble company for progress in the spiritual journey.
- 62. **Continuous Improvement:** Shedding negative qualities like attachment and hatred is an ongoing process toward enlightenment.

### **Brāhmaṇa (Ascetic) Section:**

- 63. **Freedom from Craving and Detachment:** Ascetics are those detached from worldly desires, practicing meditation and leading a life free from moral defilements.
- 64. **Humility and Non-Retaliation:** True ascetics endure hardships without anger, remain peaceful even in adversity, and do not retaliate against harm.
- 65. **Kindness and Non-Violence:** They avoid harming others physically, verbally, or mentally and are gentle even in the face of hostility.
- 66. **Wisdom and Understanding:** Ascetics possess profound wisdom, discerning right from wrong, and have reached the highest goal.

67.      **End of Suffering and Attachment:** True ascetics have abandoned attachment to sensory pleasures and have realized the end of suffering.
68.      **Ethical Conduct and Speech:** They adhere to ethical conduct and speak gently, truthfully, without offending others.
69.      **Renunciation and Non-Attachment:** Ascetics renounce worldly possessions and attachments, seeking solace in solitude and detachment.
70.      **Fearlessness and Enlightenment:** They are fearless, noble, diligent, and have attained enlightenment through the eradication of moral defilements.